

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9636

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 2575

SUBJ: ATMOSPHERICS ON CYPRUS

1. WE ARE LIVING IN ATMOSPHERE PREGNANT WITH STRONG HOSTILITIES AND FANCIFUL RUMORS RE USG. WE ARE WIDELY BELIEVED TO HAVE ENGINEERED MAKARIOS' OVERTHROW, HELD BACK THE GREEK JUNTA AND LATER KARAMANLIS WHILE TURKS CARVED UP THE ISLAND, AND PROMOTED DE FACTO PARTITION. THESE EVENTS HAVE WROUGHT GREAT SUFFERING ON GREEK CYPRUS, AND POPULAR MOOD IS TO BLAME USG AS MAIN INSTIGATOR. EVEN EX FORMIN CHRISTOPHIDES TOLD US AUGUST 22 HE BELIEVES IN CIA MASTER PLOT BEHIND EVENTS OF PAST MONTH IN ATHENS-NICOSIA-ANKARA TRIANGLE.

2. THIS GENERAL MOOD HAS INFLUENCED GREEK CYPRIOT REACTIONS TO AMBASSADOR DAVIES' MURDER AS WELL. THERE HAVE OF COURSE BEEN MANY EXPRESSIONS OF GENUINE SYMPATHY FROM GOCYPRUS AND NICOSIA ESTABLISHMENT.

IN MANY CASES, THOUGH, WE DETECT DEGREE OF RESERVE, EVEN HOSTILITY, WHICH ERODES ANY SENSE OF PERSONAL TRAGEDY OVER AMBASSADOR'S DEATH. MANY GREEK CYPRIOTS QULIFY THEIR
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CONDOLENCES BY SAYING THIS MURDER WAS BAD FOR "CYPRUS CAUSE";

THEY SEEM TO ACCEPT THE CONVERSE IMPLICATION THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN OK HAD IT SERVED THAT CAUSE. THERE IS ALSO A SENTIMENT THAT THE USG "HAD IT COMING" BECAUSE OF ITS PRO-TURKEY TILT IN RECENT WEEKS. IN PART, THESE FEELINGS MAY EXPLAIN NIGGARDLY GOCYPRUSROLE IN AMBASSADOR'S CORTEGE.

3. PANDERING TO LOCAL MOOD, GREEK PRESS HIT MAJOR LOW IN ITS COVERAGE OF DAVIES MURDER. MOST PAPERS DELIVERED TOKEN CONDEMNATIONS OF MURDER, PROCEEDED TO JUSTIFY DEED AS RESULT PENT-UP FEELINGS OF BETRAYAL BY USG, PROVOCATION BY MARINES IN USING TEAR GAS AND FIRING WEAPONS ETC. (ON LATTER SCORE, TEAR GAS CANNISTERS WERE NONEXPLOSIVE AND MARINES FIRED NO RPT NO WEAPONS.) MOST PUNGENT CASES WERE AUGUST 20 AFTERNOON DAILIES WHICH EXULTED IN ATTRIBUTING MURDER TO "ERUPTION" OF POPULAR FURY AT USG SUPPORT FOR TURKISH AGGRESSION ON ISLAND. CLERIDES' OWN PAPER, "AGON," NOT IMMUNE FROM THIS VIEW: AUGUST 23 IT WARNED IN EFFECT THAT USG CAN EXPECT MORE SUCH VIOLENCE UNLESS IT SWINGS OVER TO GREEK SIDE. (SEPTTEL REPORTS UNDER SECRETARY BROWN'S DISCUSSION THIS SUBJECT WITH CLERIDES.) MOST TROUBLESOME LOCAL RUMOR IS THAT FSLE VARNAVA NOT RPT NOT KILLED BY BULLET BUT BY CLUB OR GUNBUTT IN EMBASSY. EVEN HER FAMILY AT FIRST PROFESSED TO BELIEVE THIS STORY; WE BELIEVE WE HAVE CONVINCED THEM OF TRUTH.

4. BROADCAST MEDIA MORE BALANCED ON DAVIES MURDER, THOUGH CBC COVERAGE CONTINUES TO CITE CRITICAL FOREIGN AND AMERICAN PRESS COMMENTARY ON USG CYPRUS POLICY.

5. PRIVATELY, WE ARE TAKING LINE THAT AUGUST 19 DEMONSTRATION, TRAGIC AS ITS OUTCOME WAS, SHOULD NOT RPT NOT UNDERMINE OUR LONGTERM BILATERAL RELATIONS, OR WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE VIA DIPLOMACY FOR SOLUTION TO CURRENT CRISIS. WE ARE ALSO EXPRESSING VIEW THAT SHOTS WERE DELIBERATE, PREMEDITATED EFFORT TO MURDER AMBASSADOR DAVIES AND HIS STAFF. (ATTY. GEN. TORNARITIS PRIVATELY AGREED WITH THIS POINT.)

6. TO COLLECT PUBLIC RECORD WHICH LARGELY DISTORTED DUE TO PIO MISSTATEMENTS OF FACT, WE ARE PREPARING A FACT SHEET ON AUGUST 19 DEMONSTRATION. CYPRUS POLICE WILL HELP WITH PUBLICATION CORRECT VERSION OF EVENTS. WE REALIZE, IN ALL CANDOR, THAT ALL THESE EFFORTS WILL NOT OVERCOME STRONG PREJUDICE HERE TO CREDIT
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ANTI-USG LIES AS TRUE, AND TO SPREAD THEM AROUND IN THIS VERY GOSSIPY SOCIETY. THIS IS A REALITY OF CYPRUS SCENE WE SHALL HAVE TO ENDURE FOR SOME WHILE.

7. TURK CYPRIOTS, BY CONTRAST HAVE SHOWN MUCH PERSONAL CONCERN FOR AMBASSADOR DAVIES' MURDER, AND HAVE LARDED THEIR REACTIONS WITH HEAVY ANTI-GREEK PROPAGANDA. SELF-SERVING EDITORIALS THIS VEIN ARE DAILY OCCURRENCE. BROWN

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